

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering the present application. Please reconsider the present application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-15 were pending in the present application. Claim 1 has been canceled. Thus, claims 2-15 are now pending in the present application. Claims 8 and 12 are independent claims. The remaining claims depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 8.

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 2, 4, 6-8, and 12-15 have been amended by way of this reply. Claims 8 and 12 have been amended into independent form. Claims 2, 4, 6, 7, and 13-15 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 8. Claim 4 has been further amended to correct the lack of antecedent basis. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 8-12 contain allowable subject matter. Claims 8 and 12 have been rewritten into independent form. Claims 9-11 depend from now independent claim 8. Thus, claims 8-12 now stand allowable.

Objections to the Claims

Claims 1 and 4 were objected to for antecedent basis issues and a typographical error. Claim 1 has been canceled, and the antecedent basis issues and typographical error were corrected in the limitations incorporated into claims 8 and 12 from claim 1. Claim 4 has been amended to correct the lack of antecedent basis. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-5, 7, and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,163,115 (“Ishizuka”). Claim 1 has been canceled, and claims 2-5, 7, and 15 have been amended to depend, either directly or indirectly, from allowable claim 8. Thus, claims 2-5, 8, and 15 are patentable over Ishizuka, for at least the same reasons as claim 8. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishizuka. Claim 6 has been amended to depend from allowable claim 8. Thus, claim 8 is patentable over Ishizuka, for at least the same reasons as claim 8. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 13-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishizuka in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0095069 (“Yamashita”). Claims 13 and 14 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 8. Thus, claim 8 is patentable over

Ishizuka and Yamashita, for at least the same reasons as claim 8. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

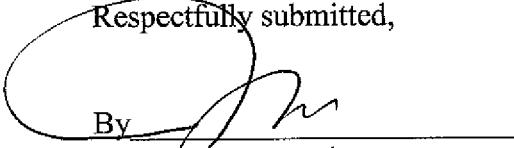
Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account No. 50-0591, under Order No. 04465/023001 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

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Respectfully submitted,

By


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